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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
Office of Current Intelligence  
17 November 1965

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Soviet Naval Air Force Developing Long-Range  
Reconnaissance/Strike Capability

25X1 1. The Soviet Naval Air Force is augmenting its capability for long-range overwater reconnaissance and strike missions.

2. The initial assignment of Bears to the Naval Air Force was detected [redacted] when five Bears were sighted at Severomorsk, a naval air base on the Kola Peninsula.

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25X1 3. The Naval Air Force has long recognized a weakness in its ability to perform extended-range missions against Western naval surface forces. In the past it has had to rely on Long Range Aviation (LRA) to provide bombers for these flights even though LRA crews have been essentially trained for strategic bombardment. Now, with its own fleet of Bears, the navy will be able to train crews specifically for naval reconnaissance/strike missions and will have this capability under its full-time control.

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8. If a Bear were to be used in a strike role it would require a compatible antishipping missile. We have no evidence that such a missile is being developed for the Bear. Some Bears in LRA carry the Kangaroo--a 350-mile air-to-surface missile--but this is designed primarily for use against land targets. Its guidance would require major modifications before it could pinpoint fast-moving naval targets.

9. The Bear appears well suited for the navy's extended-range reconnaissance needs. With inflight refueling, it can remain aloft 25-28 hours and can fly over 12,000 miles on reconnaissance missions. The Bear's relatively low speed--about 425 knots--makes it an easy target for carrier aircraft to intercept. At this time, however, it is the best available plane for long-range reconnaissance and strikes against Western naval forces, and we will probably see additional Bears assigned to the Fleet Air Force. [REDACTED]

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## INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

SOVIET NAVAL AIR FORCE DEVELOPING  
LONG-RANGE RECONNAISSANCE/STRIKE CAPABILITY

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DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

Office of Current Intelligence

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS 1  
EXEMPTED  
CLASS. CHANGED TO: TS S C  
NEXT REVIEW DATE: \_\_\_\_\_  
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GROUP 1  
Excluded from automatic  
downgrading and  
declassification

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